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ABSTRACT

This study reports the findings of a survey of students enrolled in a distance education English course at Cambrian College. In fall 1999, the college began a trial delivery of freshman English using WebCT software. The trial involved six classes ranging from seven to twenty-one students, with a total of 76 students. The instructor had several years experience with online courses, but not in a postsecondary setting and not on WebCT. At the end of the semester, all 76 students were asked to participate in an online survey to evaluate their experience in the virtual classroom. Thirty-six students responded to the survey. A majority of the respondents found the experience to be a positive one. The flexibility of online delivery was especially appealing. Some respondents were highly unsatisfied with the experience. The author speculates that unsatisfied students might not be prepared to take the responsibility for their learning required by online delivery. Survey results and student responses are appended. Contains 1 reference, 1 table, and three figures. (RDG)

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Learner Reactions to College English on WebCT

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Abstract

In the fall semester of 1999, Cambrian College delivered freshman English online, using WebCT software, to 76 learners in six classes. At the end of the semester, the learners were surveyed anonymously to get a measure of their reactions to the virtual classroom. Thirty-six people completed the survey. Most of the learners clearly found the experience a positive one. It was the flexibility of online delivery that was especially appealing to them. A minority of the learners were highly dissatisfied with the experience. The author speculates that some college students are not prepared to take responsibility for their learning. Online delivery makes demands on learners that they do not encounter in the regular classroom.

In August of 1999, Cambrian College began a trial delivery of freshman English using WebCT. The trial involved six classes and a total of 76 students. Class sizes ranged from seven to twenty-one. The instructor had several years of experience with online delivery, but not in a postsecondary setting and not on WebCT. At the end of the semester, all learners were given the opportunity to participate in an online survey that evaluated their experience in the virtual classroom. Anonymity was promised and guaranteed by the WebCT software. Thirty-six people responded, and all of their responses are included in the appendix to this paper.

The course chosen for delivery was ENG 1500, a compulsory English course in the first semester of all College programs. It is an introductory composition course. Here are the course objectives, taken directly from the course outline:

> Writing Skills
>
> Through practice and application of sound writing principles, students will demonstrate an ability to do the following:
>
> 1. Identify a topic and develop an essay containing a thesis and appropriate structural and support paragraphs.
>
> 2. Demonstrate an understanding of the concept of audience by taking the readers' communicative needs into account.
>
> 3. Incorporate secondary source material with appropriate citations and documentation.

The learners were required to do four written assignments: a page of description, a two-page comparison essay, a one-page set of instructions, and a three-page research essay. Ten marks were assigned for online participation.

Like many postsecondary institutions, Cambrian College is in transition. During the delivery of this course, the course was tied, administratively, to an independent

learning package on English grammar. Thirty percent of the final grade was based on the independent learning package (three objective tests worth ten percent each). This information is important for several reasons. For one thing, some of the participants' responses will not be meaningful unless the independent learning package is understood. See, for example, Question 4, Response 1, and Question 5, Responses 5 and 28. For another thing, the respondents' attitudes could well have been coloured by a negative reaction to the independent learning component. The questionnaire was designed to exclude independent learning, but the learners were very much aware of the independent learning component during the progress of the semester. In other words, the trial circumstances were less than ideal. There was a strong possibility of responses being corrupted by the significant red herring of independent learning. It is clear, however, that such corruption was minimal. The experience of online delivery was obviously a positive one for the majority of learners.

Another possible factor in influencing student attitudes was technical failure. Of course, during the course of the semester there were many small technical problems. More importantly, there was one major technical failure. The first written assignment was due at midnight on September 26. The WebCT server broke down completely on that day, and the virtual classroom disappeared until the following day. At the start of the semester we were operating the class on a Windows NT server. That was the cause of most of our technical problems, including the total breakdown. By October 7, we had moved the class over to a Linux server, and we experienced very few problems after that.

The total breakdown on September 26 was confusing and frustrating for everyone. It resulted in approximately thirty extra hours of work for the instructor. When the

students were unable to access the software to hand in their first assignment, they used e-mail and the telephone to contact the instructor. For three days, they also showed up in person at the instructor's door to hand in hard copy or to ask questions about how to submit their assignments. This experience appears to have been more negative for the instructor than for the learners. It goes largely unnoticed in the survey responses. The survey was available online from December 1 to December 15. It seems that the incident was largely forgotten by then. It shows up directly only in Question 3, Responses 2 and 22.

At the beginning of the semester, each class met once with the instructor. This happened during the week of August 30 to September 3. The focus of the initial meeting was to try to set learners' minds at ease about online delivery, which none of them had ever experienced before. The course content was de-emphasized. The objective of the first class was how to access the virtual classroom. The primary document distributed was a detailed, ten-page handout on how to access the College network and how to use a browser to access the online class. There was little doubt that simple access to the classroom would be a challenge for many of the first-year students. The instructor made it clear that he would be readily accessible to help students get access. He provided his office number, his phone number, his e-mail address and even his home phone number. He remained in his office for ten to twelve hours a day for the first five weeks.

The first person to log on did it on August 30. Five more people logged on by August 31. After that, there was a steady stream for several weeks. The last two people to log on did so on October 3. There is no question that logging on to the College network and then to the class was a serious barrier for a number of students. We had no

College computer lab designated for our use. Open labs are heavily used at our College. Those who had no personal Internet access were at a distinct disadvantage. Nine people didn't ever log on at all. It would be useful to know exactly why. At the same time, it seems reasonable to assume that some of them would have dropped out, no matter what the delivery system.

The class bulletin board was where "class" was held. All homework assignments were given on the bulletin boards. Almost all discussion took place there. In the course of the semester, a total of 1154 postings were generated. The secondary means of communication was e-mail. Personal questions were asked in private e-mail. Assignments were submitted in private e-mail. The instructor was involved in a total of 1401 e-mail messages, of which he generated 1039. It is easy to see that the instructor was proactive, seizing every opportunity that presented itself to encourage the online learners.

Participation levels varied a great deal. The most "hits" by an individual student was an astonishing 793 ("hits" include e-mails read, bulletin board postings read, files examined and links used). The most postings by an individual was 26. On the other end, the least hits by an individual was 15. And nineteen people didn't ever post at all (among people who logged on, that is).

It is worthwhile to examine the number of hits on certain key course files. The files were always available. They were frequently mentioned by the instructor. Some assignments were based on some of the files. The following graphic shows the number of hits, the total time spent, and the average time per hit on twenty-two course files:

Page Name	Hits	Time	Time/Hit
Our Living Room	129	58h 29min 47s	27min 12s
SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS	125	42h 18min 42s	20min 18s
SAMPLE ESSAY	113	37h 7min 55s	19min 42s
ALL MUSIC GUIDE	110	27h 40min 31s	15min 5s
COURSE OUTLINE	98	62h 54s	37min 58s
Writing Instructions	91	16h 43min 25s	11min 1s
LOGON INSTRUCTIONS	88	19h 57min 13s	13min 36s
Those Were the Days	80	22h 38min 13s	16min 58s
GRADING CRITERIA	79	9h 33min 46s	7min 15s
BIBLIOGRAPHY	79	17h 26min 59s	13min 15s
NOTE TAKING	54	9h 16min 44s	[illegible]nin 18s
ESSAY STRUCTURE	44	2h 29min 47s	3min 24s
MOCK TEST 3	42	8h 33min 49s	12min 14s
ROUGH SCHEDULE	41	11h 3min 0s	16min 10s
END OF SEMESTER SURVEY	40	9h 14min 21s	13min 51s
PARTICIPATION MARKS	38	8h 27min 23s	13min 21s
USING E-MAIL	35	9h 18min 52s	15min 58s
USING THE BULLETIN BOARD	34	6h 41min 38s	11min 48s
ONLINE BOOK SEARCH	34	1h 39min 18s	2min 55s
ONLINE JOURNALS	33	2h 4min 20s	3min 46s
CLASS HOURS	25	1h 55min 53s	4min 38s
POSTING TO YOUR GROUP	21	2h 50min 47s	8min 7s

This graphic merits some attention. It reveals a lot about learner priorities, as well as online delivery. It was necessary to read the most-used document, "Our Living Room," in order to participate in one week's class discussion. It was also a model for the first written assignment. "Submitting Assignments" was the second-most accessed document. This is not surprising. Most students wanted to avail themselves of the ease of submitting digital assignments online. The WebCT process of attaching files to an e-mail message is not a particularly friendly one, so the help file was needed by just about everyone. The third file, "SAMPLE ESSAY," was a model for the research project.

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which was worth twenty percent of the final grade. It was essential to consult "ALL MUSIC GUIDE" in order to do the second written assignment. It was important to consult both "Writing Instructions" and "LOGON INSTRUCTIONS" in order to do the third written assignment.

It is disappointing to see that the two files explaining online library use were so little used. "ONLINE BOOK SEARCH" and "ONLINE JOURNALS" were consulted by fewer than half of the students. It appears that libraries, even when they can be accessed online, are not attractive places for community college students. About halfway through the semester, the instructor arranged "real" sessions to introduce students to the College library. These sessions were very poorly attended.

The essence of the survey, in the instructor's opinion, is Question 13. Here is Question 13 and the possible responses (available as radio buttons to respondents):

> If I were offered another opportunity to take an online course, my attitude would be:
>
> 1 Extremely negative
> 2 Slightly negative
> 3 Indifferent
> 4 Slightly positive
> 5 Extremely positive

And here is the graphic that summarizes the learners' responses to the question (individual responses can be found in the appendix).

Answer	Frequency Distribution
1	5
2	7
3	6
4	7
5	11

The pattern is clear. Of the thirty-six respondents, eighteen (50%) obviously like online delivery. Eleven (almost 33%) have an extremely positive reaction to online delivery. Only five (just under 14%) have an extremely negative reaction to online delivery.

It is useful, in my opinion, to examine the detailed responses to the other questions in the light of this overall indication of approval. Some of the responses speak for themselves; others require interpretation.

When designing the survey, the instructor assumed that there would be many people with little or no experience of the technologies used for the delivery of the course. Students at the College have never been formally surveyed to determine their levels of comfort with computers. The purpose of the first question was to determine learners' prior experience with technology. The technologies required for the course were primarily word processing and the Internet. Only two respondents reported having no prior experience. Only another eight reported having little experience. Sixteen respondents (44%) declared themselves to have at least a "moderate" amount of experience, and ten (almost 28%) had "lots" of experience. Many of the students were ready for online delivery, with minimal support required from either the College or the instructor.

The second question on the survey solicited learner input on the benefits of online delivery. Respondents had to generate their own textual responses to the question: "What were some of the benefits you think you gained by taking this course online?" Fourteen people liked the flexibility of online delivery; it gave them the ability to organize their time in a way that was convenient to them. Eleven people liked the generic computer skills that they developed as a result of taking this course online. Two people

(Respondents 12 and 32) referred directly to responsibility as a benefit of online delivery; they clearly welcomed the opportunity to take charge of their own learning. It is fascinating to the instructor that three people referred to being able to hand in assignments early (Respondents 21, 22 and 33). During the course of the semester, the instructor received thirty-one early assignments. In the course of almost three decades, the instructor has never received an early assignment in a regular classroom situation. It now seems obvious that many students in conventional classrooms complete their work early, but it is not convenient for them to hand in their work when it is done. The benefit to the instructor of receiving early assignments will be obvious: It enables an instructor to space out marking over a longer period of time than is normally allowed. The instructor took pains to encourage the submission of early assignments. For one thing, they were always marked and returned within a very short period of time, often an hour or less.

Six respondents (9, 11, 18, 27, 34 and 35) could not identify any benefits. However, even one of these (27) appreciated the flexibility of online delivery: "I got to sleep in on Fridays."

Question 3 was intended to reveal learners' perceptions of the drawbacks of online delivery. Five people missed realtime interaction. Four referred to technical problems. At least three people found the experience confusing. Only three identified access problems. Three referred to slow response on the part of the instructor. It's important to mention at this time that there never was a gap of more than eight hours between student question and instructor response. The instructor was available seven days a week, statutory holidays included. Response time of under one hour was the norm, during "normal" working hours. Response within five minutes was common.

Five respondents (3, 4, 5, 7 and 13) mentioned, specifically, that they found no drawbacks to online delivery. This is significant because the question was eliciting drawbacks.

Two respondents (23 and 24) mentioned the need for self discipline, self reliance and self motivation. In an earlier study (Mende, 1998) the instructor hypothesized that "Not all learners, even mature adults, are self-directed." In any group of thirty-six community college students, it is certain that some will lack the maturity necessary to take charge of their own learning.

Respondent 6 brings attention to an important aspect of online delivery. Respondent 6 posted, "No teacher to actually teach lessons. I rarely opened my book." While this respondent perceives this as a drawback, the instructor has quite a different view. Doing nothing, sitting unobtrusively and passively, is an all-too-common occurrence in the realtime class. This kind of passive behavior is far less likely to occur in the virtual classroom, where marks are given for meaningful participation. Learners who want the participation marks are compelled to do the course reading, think about the reading, and use it to participate in online discussion. The instructor feels so strongly about this that he plans to assign twenty percent of class marks for participation in future online classes, not ten percent as he did during this trial run. Online education is very close to the instructor's experience of one-on-one education. There is no back row for the reluctant learner to hide in.

Question 4 asked respondents to identify their "favourite feature" of the online course. Flexibility was, once again, much prized by the learners. At least seventeen people referred to flexibility, in various ways. Four people were pleased to have ready

access to their marks at any time. Three people praised the instructor for his quick response time (13, 14, 35).

Respondent 35 posted, "I wasn't too shy to post anything on the board, where as [sic] in class I rarely rais [sic] my hand." In analyzing the responses to the third question, we saw that five people missed realtime interaction. It's important to note that at least one person saw online interaction to be a positive thing. This person was not disadvantaged by the shyness experienced in a real social situation, but could be a full participant in class interactions.

Question 5 asked respondents to identify their "least favourite feature" of the online course. The main problem, identified by at least five people, seemed to be the lack of face-to-face interaction. Five people mentioned problems with handing in assignments online. It is important to note that the instructor also accepted hard copy assignments from anyone, even while encouraging people to take advantage of the flexibility of online submission. Only one person, Respondent 26, commented on another technical problem, the bulletin board with its Show All feature. Two people found that the instructor did not respond quickly enough. The instant gratification of the classroom is not possible online, in an asynchronous environment. But in a real class (ENG 1500 meets only once a week when delivered in the regular classroom) a learner would have to wait up to seven days for a response from the instructor, unless he or she took extraordinary measures to phone the instructor or locate him in person. No one waited more than eight hours, ever, during the course of this semester's delivery.

Once again, when given the opportunity for negative feedback, six respondents (4, 13, 14, 15, 23 and 33) stated clearly that they had nothing negative to report.

Printing was the subject of Question 6. At least nine people used digital files, most or all of the time. The instructor assumed that this question would elicit responses having to do with learning styles. Some people like to have hard copy in their hands, at least some of the time. But the people who printed (6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 28) often did so because they didn't have easy access to the Internet. They needed hard copy because the hard copy was their easiest way to access the necessary information. At the same time, at least seven people referred to learning style issues (9, 16, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25). Two people printed because they had no trust in the technology or their ability to master it (29 and 32).

Communication with classmates was the subject of the seventh question. The responses were varied, but it seems that most personal communication was concerned with clarifying or verifying information about the course. Only three people referred specifically to using e-mail (5, 16, 22). Respondent 7 stated, "Whenever i needed some help id go straight to [the instructor]." It was the instructor's experience that, whenever someone had some kind of crisis situation (death in the family, conflict over due dates), they reverted to face-to-face means of communication. We could put it this way: When they most needed to communicate with the instructor, they set up barriers to communication. In the case of one learner who experienced a death in the family, the instructor tried to be sensitive to his need for personal contact. After a full week of failing to reach each other by telephone, the instructor finally convinced him to use e-mail. Communication was quickly established by e-mail.

Question 8 had to do with co-operation with classmates. Was co-operation encouraged by online delivery, more or less than in a conventional classroom? Fully

nineteen people felt that there was less co-operation in the virtual classroom than in a real classroom. Only four felt that there was more co-operation. Respondent 14 raised the issue of shyness again (see Question 4, Respondent 35): "[S]tudents were less shy about participating in class discussions." So we have evidence that at least two people involved in this study grasped the positive significance of virtual community for their own social interactions.

Question 9 explored the issue of virtual support. Specifically, which aspects of online support were helpful: e-mail, the bulletin board, chat? The bulletin board was identified by the instructor as the "class." It is here that he posted all homework assignments, for example. So it is not surprising that twenty-one people specifically mentioned the bulletin board as the most important means of support. Eleven people mentioned e-mail. One person (Respondent 15) felt that e-mail was especially effective because the instructor "promptly answered and helped you."

The instructor made the WebCT chat feature available, but he didn't encourage its use in any way. The three people who referred to chat did not do so in a positive way. The instructor has a strong personal commitment to asynchronous communication. It seems to him to be the most efficient way of exploiting the virtual classroom. Still, in another course, perhaps a course involving collaborative assignments, the chat feature might be useful and could be promoted.

Respondent 16 clearly wanted a "real" support system in place. Respondent 29 seems to share this bias, in a more subdued way.

Help files were an important part of the course delivery. A few of these were distributed in hard copy at the first and only real class in August. Others were available

online, once the students had gained access to the virtual classroom. There were files on using e-mail, using the bulletin boards, submitting assignments, etc. We have already seen that the SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS online file was very heavily used, with a total hit time of over forty-two hours.

Question 10 had to do with these help files. Here's how the tenth question was worded:

> Were the files useful to you in helping you accomplish the technical tasks that were required of you? [eg. how to access the class, how to submit your assignments, etc.]
>
> 1. Not at all
> 2. A bit
> 3. Quite a bit
> 4. Very much, indeed
> 5. I didn't need the help files

Here's the WebCT graphic display that shows the responses to the question:

Answer	Frequency Distribution
1	0
2	8
3	11
4	14
5	2

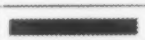
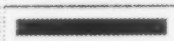
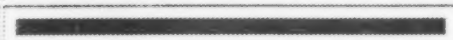
There can be no doubt of the importance of the various help files. All respondents found that the help files were at least "a bit" useful.

Question 11 measured the satisfaction of the respondents with the instructor's support. The question was worded like this:

> Was the instructor available to you when you needed help with accomplishing the technical tasks that were required of you?
>
> 1. Never

2. Sometimes
3. Often
4. Always
5. I didn't need him

Here's the graphic display that summarizes the responses to this question:

Answer	Frequency Distribution	
1	0	
2	6	
3	7	
4	20	
5	1	

Not a single response was completely negative. 20 people (55%) were extremely positive in their response. It is the instructor's belief that online delivery, if it is to be successful, makes extraordinary demands on the instructor. The instructor must be available seven days a week. The flexibility that the learners prize so much demands flexibility on the part of the instructor, too. At the very least, an instructor must clearly define a minimal level of response. And, once it is defined, he or she must observe the response time scrupulously.

Question 12, which demanded a verbal response, has to do with attitude change. Respondents were asked if their attitudes toward technology had changed as a result of participating in the online delivery of their English course. At least ten of the respondents found the experience to be negative, so there was no positive change for them. At least three (5, 33 and 35) reported no change, but it was definitely not a negative experience for them. "Nope, all's the same...Peachy Keen." At least fourteen people found that their attitudes had changed in a positive way. Some of them were positively ebullient about it. "I use the Internet probably ten times as much more than

before." "I've really learned to respect the world of technology now." "It is a very effective medium of communication."

The majority of participants clearly found online delivery to be a positive experience. The survey results delineate the efficacy of online delivery.

The instructor's experience may be helpful, as well. From time to time, in reporting the survey results, he has indulged himself in a certain amount of speculation. There may be room for further speculation at this time. Keep in mind that these are observations, not quantifiable data.

There was a certain kind of posting, whether on the bulletin board or in private e-mail, that was all too common during the delivery of this course. The instructor came to think of some messages as desperate cries for help. The first cry occurred on the bulletin board on September 2: " I don't know what to do." This was on Thursday of the first week of classes. Here's another posting from November 14: " I'm having alot of problems. I can't seem to find out what I have to do." There were a total of eleven such desperate cries, two in private e-mail and nine on the bulletin board, between September 2 and November 25. The wording was almost always the same, and it indicated a complete inability to deal with online learning.

It must be made clear that the solutions to the problems of these desperate people were readily available to them. The answers to their questions were there, in help files, in bulletin board postings, in private e-mail messages. Yet this minority of people were unable to access the answers they needed.

Reading ability is, in my opinion, a factor. While we weren't able to test the reading ability of the students involved in online delivery, there can be no question that

some of them lacked the reading skills necessary for online delivery. A few years ago the College did a reading test on our entire freshman population. The median reading ability was, not surprisingly, at the tenth grade level. Where the median ability is at the tenth grade level, the lowest achievers will be far below this level. It is difficult, if not impossible, for someone with a very low reading level, below the seventh grade, for example, to successfully participate in online learning. Too much reading, at too high a level, is required of them.

Another factor, again in my opinion, is responsibility. Many community college students are not ready to take responsibility for their learning. They are dependent on their professors to read for them, to remind them of deadlines, to repeat instructions, and so on. As community college professors, we fall into these habits, and we do so out of good will. We want our students to be successful, and we act in ways that facilitate their success. But our behaviours may not necessarily be in the students' best interests. If our job is to prepare our students for the world of work, then we may not be doing them a favour by encouraging them to be dependent on us.

The flexible learner who thrives in a virtual learning environment is quite likely to be the flexible worker who thrives in the shifting environment of the modern workplace.

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APPENDIX

SURVEY RESULTS

ONLINE DELIVERY OF ENGLISH 1500

FALL SEMESTER 1999

36 RESPONSES FROM 76 LEARNERS

Question 1: Prior Experience of Technology

Prior to this online course, my experience with technology (word-processing, the Internet, etc.) could be described as:

1. no experience
2. little experience
3. moderate experience
4. lots of experience

Respondent #	Question 1
1	3
2	4
3	2
4	3
5	4
6	4
7	2
8	3
9	3
10	2
11	2
12	2
13	3
14	1
15	4
16	3
17	2
18	3
19	1
20	3
21	4
22	3
23	4
24	4
25	3
26	3
27	4
28	4
29	2
30	3
31	3
32	2
33	3
34	3
35	3
36	4

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Answer	Frequency Distribution
1	2
2	8
3	16
4	10

Question 2: Benefits of Online Courses

What were some benefits you think you gained by taking this course online?

ID	Response
1	Becoming more familiar, with the schools internet
2	- could go to class when ever i wanted - it gave me more time for other things - marks were usually right on the net and items were mark aright away
3	It freed up alot of my time. It also meant that I didn't skip class once.
4	Better knowledge of the internet, use of search engines, posting to bulletin boards and use of e-mail to send information back and forth(files,ect..)
5	The course gave freedom and space to work when you felt like it. And also a day off was great aswell.
6	Less class time. Could access whenever and wherever. On own time schedule.
7	some more patience with computers
8	I learned how to do a online coarse and how it feels to do one. If I have to do another I will have some knowledge.
9	I don't think I gained any experience, if anything it was just a waist of time and too confusing for nothing. Personally I would rather be tought by a real teacher in a real classroom.
10	I think I am more computer litterate now that I had gained some sxperience with ENG online
11	I don't think there were any benefits I hated the hole semester of the bull... If I wanted to be taught by a computor I would have a bar code put in my palm
12	I realized that if you think responsibly, then you are probably capable of doing responsibly.
13	I gained alot of experience in using the internet.
14	learning how to use a computer, learning how to access the internet
15	easy access; no long, boring classes to attend; freedom:may access the class when desired; learn at own pace
16	I had more time to do homework. Instead of sitting in a class, I could simply log on for five minutes and leave again.
17	experience
18	I didn't learn anything new. Everything we used we things that I already knew how to do.
19	I gained a basic knowledge of the inter/intra net and some other computor programs.
20	I think that you gain to meet new people and talk to them on the net instead of waiting to meet them for help, they can help you right of way.
21	Some of the benefits I gained by taking this course on-line are: I am able to communicate with my teacher at any time, I wass able to hand in my assignments early, and I was able to work at my own pace - I was neither held back by the class, or left behind by the class. I was also able to work at home, which gave me more flexible hours.
22	Flexability: you can show up for class when it is convenient for you and not have to worry about being late, or if you are a morning person, early. You can even go on weekends when the teacher isn't there. It is more inviting to hand in assignments early by handing them in on line, instead of handing them directly to the teacher on a specific day.
23	I like this couse cause it teaches us to use a media that is growing ever more important as

	we progress. I also enjoy the freedom it gives the students in doing our work and getting things done.
24	I appeciated the convinience of logging on to class whenever I wanted. You can ask questions more freely. And the teacher's response time was excellent
25	I can go to class whenever i feel like it
26	you can show up when ever you want to. There is no classroom to sit in.
27	None except that I got to sleep in on Fridays.
28	learning not to post to the whole class for assignment 2 :-)
29	I don't know if it was a benefit at all. I certainly learned how to swear at a piece of equipment pretty well.
30	i learned more about the internet
31	going to class when ever you want
32	Allows the student more responsibility as well as being able to attend class whenever he or she wishes.
33	I am now more familiar to computers, and I'm now also more experienced. We can also give in homework on weekends!
34	none
35	I wasn't very impressed with the course. Sorry...
36	The benefits were that you got to explore the internet more often and that's good because the internet is a big part of our society today.

Question 3: Drawbacks of Online Courses

What were some drawbacks of being required to take this course online?

ID	Response
1	Confusion, with dates of essays, work, tests..ect. And the handing in of assignments through the internet, due to ether, problems with e-mail, Cambrian server down, or my personal computer was down.
2	- it was hard to find the teacher when you needed help - the system always acted up especially when you need to submit something - it wasn;t expalined fully, should of had a class in the computer lab were we could ask questions if were having problems
3	None that come to mind
4	I don't feel there were any drawbacks to taking this course online.
5	I had no problems and I have no complaints. However I talked with other people and some did not like this method of teaching at all, I dont know why.
6	No teacher to actually teach lessons. I rarely opened my book.
7	none that i can really see, except for maybe the lack of interaction between classmates
8	I didn't understand some of the things we had to do and it was harder to get a hold of the teacher just becasue we didn't have a class with him at all. When we write something to him we would have to wait for a response and then if we had something else to say it would take a long time. It was a long conversation period.
9	The drawbacks are that I was late on evry assignement because I was to confused and this class just raised alot of peoples stress levels.
10	Well if you don't have a computer at home or access to one
11	The lack of human interaction.
12	That if you have a question to ask the teacher while you are doing your homework and you are at home with no access to a computer, then you can't finish your homework until you get to school the next day.
13	I didn't have to take the course online but am glad that I did because I found there were no drawbacks.
14	i don't think it was structured enough...many times i forgot all about it, i missed the in class discussions, it's not the same online as it would be in real class. Mostly i just found it hard to make the time to get to a computer to get to class.
15	No *physical* communication between student and peers. Most work, exercises are not

	complete by the students
16	I sometimes need to be luctured on some things, such as essay writing. I am a horrible essay writer. teachers have told me so time and time again.
17	you don't see the teacher as often
18	Didn't have an actual class. Didn't get answers as fast as you wanted them.
19	For the small group of us who had no experience it put us between a rock and a hard place. Sort of like learn or to bad. Very impersonnal and for those who are shy or would not take the opportunity to go see the teacher they are basically stuck.
20	You had to make sure you were on the net at least two or more times so you can make sure you had your homework.
21	I found the main drawback to be that I wasn't able to have full discussions with my class. I have always prefered to discuss subjects face-to-face.
22	the system sometimes goes off line.
23	You need to have computer skills, and enough self discipline to get all your assignments done. There is no Teacher that is there during "class time" to push you into getting your assignments done, you have to rely on yourself.
24	-technical problems (with the online software or your internet provider.) must be self-motivated
25	technical problems prevented me from finnishing some of my assignments on time
26	It is so inconvenient when you are on a trip or something and you have to work on an English assignment when you are supposed to be on a little holid
27	I would've participated if we had've been in a real class room. I hated posting on the board.
28	not logging on enough being lazy at times with assignments using online class time for personal use
29	1. Learning how to attach something and hoping like hell the teacher recieved it. 2. No interaction on personal basis.
30	no fun waste of tome
31	forget about class, and computer problems, computer access
32	I felt it was harder to ask the teacher for assistance and there was more confusion as to the instructions for certain assignments.
33	Because we were able to go online anytime, and other destracting homework, sometimes we would be late for a hand in assignment or comment in class.
34	forgetting about the course all together
35	I know that I would have definatly got a better grade in a regulare English class
36	They were that if you had questions it was really hard to ask the teacher because you had to do it online and sometimes you didn't get a response fast enough or the teacher didn't tell you what you wanted to know so most of us were confused and had to rely on our fellow students

Question 4: Online Favourite

What was your favourite feature of the online course?

ID	Response
1	Mock Tests, Forum
2	having the assignments back to you quickly
3	Handing in essays on a Saturday or Sunday was great. It makes a week an actual week, instead of just being 5 days.
4	My favorite feature was being able to do my work at anytime during the day. When I had taken(and failed) eng1500 in a class room, it was on a friday morning at eight o'clock and if I could get motivated to go to it, I was never fully aware of what was going on.
5	My favorite feature is the fact that assigments are handed in over the net.
6	Dont know
7	it was quite convenient, especially since im a music student. i was able to do the assignments and works at the wired times of day that in which i function best

8	going on whenever.
9	I didn't have any, I hated this class.
10	I liked the fact that we didnt have to actually go to class we could just do our work when we wanted....
11	I didn't have any
12	Being able to do it whenever
13	Being able to access the class from home and at any time that I need to. I can also ask questions at any time and they are always answered in a timely fashion. These features were my favourite.
14	i liked the fact that my teacher was always around, if i e-mailed him, he's usually get back to me very quickly, i also really liked the idea of my marks being so accessible...i knew how i was doing through out the entire semester, instead of waiting for mid term marks...
15	Being able to have access to your marks at any given time. Also I like the one-on-one feeling from the teacher
16	The bullitin board. You could post questions and read other peoples questions and answers.
17	classroom bulletin board
18	Nothing really
19	Freedom of course times (go to class whenever you want Midnight, or 2:00 am) and due dates of midnight.
20	That you didnt have to leave your house, that you could stay home to look up your homework. You were also able to email any of your classmates at anytime.
21	My favourite feature was being able to hand in my assignments early and get my marks back the next day
22	flexability
23	I like the fact that I could do all my work from home, since I have my own computer. It gives me a break from classes and I have the freedom of accessing the online class room when I want.
24	stay at home
25	check your marks
26	Didn't have one
27	Have Fridays off since we didnt have to go to english class
28	not having to get up @ 8am every Tuesday being able to work from home
29	just having access to the internet
30	the way the teacger answered back so quick
31	easy to follow
32	That I didn't have a set time to go to class. I could attend class whenever I felt like doing English.
33	My favorite feature is being able to do my work in class at home or in my free time, at any time. This class gives me typing and computer experience.
34	n/a
35	I wasn't to shy to post anything on the board, where as in class I rarely rais my hand.
36	My favorite feauture was that we got to see our marks whenever we wanted to

Question 5: Least Favourite

What was your least favourite feature of the online course?

ID	Response
1	The handing in of assignments, and having a page dedicated for just due dates on assignments could have really inhanced my marks I believe.
2	- the fact that the last three assignment were due back to back at the end of the semester and were not spread out through out the semester
3	not being able to have a teacher look at half of my work and tell me if I'm on the right track.

4	Again, I don't have anything negative to say.
5	Well, getting up real early to write tests kinda sucked, but I got over it.
6	No comment
7	
8	not getting to talk to the teacher face to face
9	Sending assignements over the net, or maybe having to wait for a response from the teacher.
10	Well at first I didnt know anything about computers so I had a little bit of trouble.....
11	The hole online thing....
12	Not being in contact with your teacher and getting to know the little annoying things he may do.
13	I didn't have any bad experiences with the online class.
14	i don't think i really had a least favorite feature...most of it was really well organized, put toghether very well
15	Don't have one
16	the bullitin board that is where all the assignments are handed out.
17	chat room
18	Everything because there was no class time with the teacher.
19	Impersonal and felt sort of cheated out my tuition money or at least over charge for some course with no real classes.
20	My least favourite was that it was sometimes hard to send in your homework, that you would have to redo sometimes, so you can try to send it back out agin.
21	Lack of person-to-person communication
22	teacher isn't always available, but he gets back to you as soon as possible.
23	There are no real drawbacks to this type of class delivery
24	no one to tell you to go to class
25	submitting assignments
26	In the forum, the fact that you can't garbage anything. You just have to hit show unread which can be annoying if you have to share a computer with someone and they go on before you and read everything that you do so you have to show all and you get everything back. Also, there is no logout bu
27	The way the marks for participation worked & having to comment on little readings to get the par. marks
28	having to come in on tuesdays to do the tests being unsupervised with homework
29	trying to submit assignments from other computers not in this school
30	to much work compared to last year
31	same stuff came on screen everyday
32	It was harder to get my questions answered by the teacher and instructions were sometimes confusing.
33	I can't think of one.
34	everything
35	I like knowing the criteria of our assignments and not having to search all over the board for them
36	My least favorite was if you didn't understnd the assigment you had to wait to get a reply before you could do anything.

Question 6: Printing

Did you often print hard copy of course files/mail messages, or did you work with the digital files? If you often printed, please explain why.

ID	Response
1	I often printed out my files, as well as digital, depending on what the file was.
2	i mostly workedwith the ditial files unless it was soething that had to do with the written assignments
3	Just used the digital files.

4	I printed hard copies of course files only some of the time and it was so that I could easily work from them to get my assignment done.
5	I did not print stuff. I just read everything right out of the course files.
6	Often printed because i was using school computer, so i had to take home printouts and read or study later.
7	i just worked right off of the screen usually
8	I printed often. So I could take home what it sayed and then I could look at it and do the work.
9	I often printed so I would be able to organize myself for my project.
10	I often printed because I found it was easier than going online again if I was missing something or wasnt sure about something
11	I often printed hard copies because I don't have a computor at home...It was the only way I could to my work at home.
12	no
13	I printed often because at the beginning of the semester I didn't have my own computer. I had to print at the school in order to refer to instructions at home.
14	i didn't have any problems printing anything
15	I printed most stuff mainly because I don't own my own computer and because it's faster than re-writing it.
16	I printed. I like to have a paper of what I am doing next to me. It helps me out immeasurably. Not a digital file, of which you must go back and forth to read.
17	i didn't print often but i did when it was necessary to complete my work
18	I printed every single discussion, essay, test that we needed to do because its easier for me to read it from a paper than on the computer screen.
19	Printed a fair amount, because was/am not a big fan of computors or digital files and they are/were easier to read.
21	I printed a few of the course files so that I could review them without using up my internet hours.
22	I used both. I printed so that I could remember what to answer or write about, so the important stuff wouldn't be forgotten.
23	I enjoy priting the information so I can go back to it easily for a reference when I am doing my assignments
24	yes, to have easy reference
25	I had trouble with digital files so I found it easer to print
26	I only printed the mock tests so I could do them at home
27	
28	yes printed hard copies all the time just to keep references close and not having to log on all the time
29	I often printed because i was afraid that I would lose things trying to send them
30	
31	no, because I could work with digital files
32	I often printed hard copies as I don't know how to email.
33	I didn't print very often.
34	no
35	I worked with the digital files.
36	No i didn't print the courses files or the mail messages.

Question 7: Communication with Classmates

Did you communicate with classmates (e-mail, telephone, in person) concerning the course? If you did, please explain why.

ID	Response
1	I asked other students that I knew were in the same class as me, of when due dates were and tests.

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2 i did, i was trying to help them when they were having problems with the course, how fustrated they were with teh course etc.
3 I occasionaly spoke to mates about test dates or assignment dates, just to make sure we were on the same page.
4 I never really communicated with the others.
5 I never did, with the exception of e-mailing Richard Mende. I never really needed to consult anybody for info.
6 No
7 not really. whenever i needed some help id go straight to richard
8 We saw each other every day so we could talk face to face. We would ask if we did something or read something on the computer and what we got on something else.
9 I communicated with other classmates because I didn't have time to wait for the teacher to help me.
10 Yes often if I had a question or something
11 The only time I really expressed my thoughts on the course was when I was complaining about the online part.
12 when i went online i was usually with one of my buddies so i just asked them personally
13 Not as much as I would have liked to because I didn't know any of the other students. I'm in a different course and was lucky enough to be offered this course online. I did leave a couple of general messages for my online classmates through posting.
14 no i did not
15 In person. Just to talk about upcomming tests, or essays for reassurance
16 No not really. Now and then my friends and I would simply send a Hello E-mail.
17 yes, to explain, or to tell them about the latest assignment
18 Yes, we discussed about the course in general and everybody was agreeing that it is not practical.
19 Yes, in person, in a attempt to fing out what was due and when. Alot of the files were difficult to get accustomed to.
20 no!
21 I comminucated with a few, we all really liked it. The topic came up in day-to-day conversation.
22 I learned how to e-mail people by talking to my class mates. I didn't know how to do that before. I was experienced with using computers, but I was a total "green thumb" when it came to the internet. I didn't understand any of the language. Now I do, somewhat.
23 I really didn't communicate with my classmates about this course except to ask if they got their assignments done.
24 no
25 I did not compleatly understand the work and I needed some feedback
26 No I didn't.
27 Just asked questions when I saw them if I hadn't been on in a few days regarding assignments
29 Yes, because half the time i knew not what was going on
30 din't need to
31 yes, in person our class discussed problem with online english
32 I communicated with classmates in person usually to see if they had been to class and if there was any knew homework or participation that week.
33 Sometimes I would call a friend about homework just to verify on what we had to do or sometimes I don't have time so I ask someone to check for me.
34 no
35 No, because I see then in my other classes
36 Me and my classmates would talk about what we had to do for the course alot because most of the time you didn't understand the assigment so we had to rely on our fellow classmates.

Question 8: Cooperation

Did online delivery encourage cooperation/communication with classmates? More or less than

in a traditional classroom setting?

ID	Response
1	I think that it all depended on the person. If I were to take Eng, through the internet again, I would probobly be more cooperative because I now know understand this better. Compared to the first few hectic weeks in the beggining, in wich I was almost clueless of even getting trough my password let alone handing in an assignment.
2	i beileve that it encouraged more communication/coperation with classmates because a lot of people were fusrated with the whole deilvery of the course and how to do thing etc..
3	Less than in a classroom, just because you can't see everyone here. Everybody comes on at different times.
4	I found it easier to cooperate/communicate with the teacher, so I didn't need to contact classmates(for missed notes,ect..)
5	I dont think it did, I went to the classroom chat a few times, checked everyroom and there was never anybody in there but me. And I seldomly discused things with classmates in school, or out of school, it never came up.
6	Not very much comunication, maybe some cooperation.
7	
8	I think it might of did.
9	NO.Classmates just went on did what they had to do..
10	Yes, it was easier and also different communicating with classmates online
11	Less, because the lact of contact with the others... The was no class room seting to initiate class debats and I never really got to know the opions of my class mates.
12	less i'd have to say, because it was like we weren't even in the same class
13	Online delivery did encourage communication but I found less than in a traditional setting.
14	Yes i think that stu.ients were less shy about participating in class discussions...although it seemed to be usually only a select few who participated frequently
15	No, I think we pretty much kept to ourselves.
16	NOPE! A lot less.
17	well its a so so thing, there was really no talking during class to get to know people but on the bright side we got the work done alot faster
18	Less than a traditional class. Because its way easier to talk to someone than e-mailing, whatever. If you talk to him/her face to face, you will your answer right there. E-mail, you can wait for days. Not very handy if you see the person everyday.
19	I don't see much of a difference.
20	No!
21	I didn't find much of a difference. I'm a bit of a loner.
22	yes. People left messages for everyone in the bulletin boards forum. They helped me, and I've even written a couple of messages myself.
23	It got us talking to each other a little bit about the assignments and wether or not we understood them and handed them in on time
24	yes
25	Less than traditionnal classroom
26	Well in a way it did but also, it didn't. When you needed help from the teacher, he was never there to answer. Also, if you wanted to know where you went wrong on a test, you couldn't find out either, not unless you
27	Didn't encourage communication.
29	Probobly more because I think everyone had problems with the online english
30	no
31	Less
32	Online delivery encouraged less cooperation/communication with classmates.
33	I think it might of encouraged some students, but I think it might not have so much.
34	no
35	I don't think it encourage me much.
36	No.

Question 9: Virtual Support

Which form of online support was most helpful to you (e-mail, bulletin board, chat room)? Is there some other kind of support that would have helped you, if available?

ID	Response
1	e-mail was definatly helpful (I still don't know how to access my Cambrian e-mail though), bulletin boards were as well, and so were the "Course file" section. But as I said earlier, one added section could be a due date page, for unpcoming assinments and tests.
2	- email it would have helped if we had a class once a week to touch base and ask any questions face to face instead of asking questions on the bulletin board or on the email
3	The bulletin board was great.
4	I found it really easy to get help through the bulletin board or e-mailing the teacher.
5	E-mail helped me most, bullatin board didnt really do much, see above for chat room.
6	bulletin board was most helpful.
7	i really liked using them all, except i didn;t really use the chat room
8	BULLETIN BOARD! The chat room I didn't use once. Not many people were on at the same time.
9	Bulletin board because of the assignements and simmilar questions they might have.
10	I think the bulletin board was the most helpful it was very well set up and very easy to use
11	The bulletin board...but that was only because that was how I had to get my assigments
12	bulletin board
13	The bulletin board was most usefull and helpful for me.
14	e-mail & definatly bulliten board worled really well for me
15	E-mail was, I beleive the biggest and best form of support (from the teacher) because he promptly answered and helped you with problems and question
16	CLASSROOM SUPPORT!
17	they all did their part in helping me do my work
18	Buletin Board really helped out because we knew what we had to do.
19	Never used the chat room, and don't know of any body that did. Bulletin board was a must how would you go to class if you did not use this opption and e-mail (privqater for handing in assaignments.
20	when sending your work in private e-mail that the attachment would come on automatic, to send to send your work out faster.
21	The most helpful was being asble to check my marks. I don't think there is any other type of support I would have needed.
22	They all helped. I've done well with what was available.
23	I thought the bulleting board was very useful, I like the idea of just posting the assignments and the replies to comments for everyone to see and add their own posts
24	bulletin board
25	bulletin board
26	The email and bulletin boards were the best forms of support. No one was ever in the chat room
27	e-mail was the most helpful.
28	bulletin board was most helpful if I didn't knw the answer just looked over posting from the previous time
29	The support that was most helpful to me was the friends that I have made this semester. Spoke to them in person and we all went to the computer to figure it out
30	email
31	bulletin board
32	The bulletin board.
33	The Bulletin Board was the most help to me.
34	no

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35 I liked the bulletin board. The only thing I wish there was, was a section were it explains all the assignments.

36 The most helpful thing was the bulletin board because when you dind't understand you could just go to the questions people already asks the teacher and hope for the best.

Question 10: Text Support

Were the text files useful to you in helping you accomplish the technical tasks that were required of you? [eg. how to access the class, how to submit your assignments, etc.]

1. Not at all
2. A bit
3. Quite a bit
4. Very much, indeed
5. I didn't need the help files.

Respondent #	Question 10
1	2
2	3
3	3
4	4
5	3
6	4
7	4
8	3
9	3
10	4
11	2
12	4
13	4
14	4
15	4
16	2
17	-
18	3
19	4
20	2
21	4
22	4
23	5
24	3
25	3
26	2
27	5
28	2
29	3
30	2
31	4
32	3
33	4
34	2
35	4
36	3

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Answer	Frequency Distribution
1	0
2	8
3	11
4	14
5	2

Question 11: Instructor Support

Was the instructor available to you when you needed help with accomplishing the technical tasks that were required of you?

1. Never
2. Sometimes
3. Often
4. Always
5. I didn't need him

Respondent #	Question 11
1	3
2	2
3	4
4	4
5	4
6	4
7	4
8	3
9	2
10	4
11	3
12	2
13	4
14	4
15	4
16	5
17	-
18	2
19	4
20	4
21	4
22	3
23	4
24	4
25	4
26	3
27	4
28	4
29	0
30	4
31	3

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32	2
33	4
34	3
35	4
36	2

Answer	Frequency Distribution
1	0
2	6
3	7
4	20
5	1

Question 12: Attitude Change

Has your attitude toward technology (Internet, e-mail, word processing, etc.) changed as a result of taking this online course? If it has, please explain.

ID	Response
1	It changed a bit, but not much since I was already familiar with the internet. (Just not the Cambrian internet).
2	with this couse i didn't gain any neew knowledge that i didn't already have, but i did get fusrated with this course and the my computer almost went out the window oin more then one occasion
3	I think its great.
4	I find that I'm more confident in using the internet for research for other courses and for personal use.
5	Nope, all's the same. Peachy Keen.
6	It has somewhat because i allowed me to accomplish something as conveniently as possible.
7	no comment
8	I don't know. I think it just made me more comfortable with this classroom.
9	Not really but I would rather be in a classroom.
10	no
11	Yes, I have started to hate it. I don't think I would ever suggest this method of taking class to anyone ever.
12	no
13	before this class, I was a little skeptical about the internet because I don't think that I was quite aware of its capabilities. Now I use the internet probably ten times as much more than before.
14	yes it has, i'v really learned to respect the world of technology now. I realize just how easy it is to communicate online. I really enjoyed the course.
15	no
16	Yes it has. I do not like the online course. It lacks the student teacher relationship that most of us students have grown accustomed to. when students are in a class, a bond can almost always form between them and the teacher, as well as students form new friendships amongst each other.
17	yes, i don't hate it as much because i got to use it on a regular basis and get to know how to use things, i would not have gotten the chance to do so otherwise
18	No it hasn't changed my attitude. It made me practice my internet skills but that's about it.

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19	no
20	I find it helps people do things faster on the internet than in person.
21	Nope.
22	yes. I've learned quite a bit and I am more comfortable using the internet. I actually know what I am doing and it is not so scary. Information is at our fingertips, and I now know how to access it on the internet.
23	I have always enjoyed this type of delivery of information. All this course has helped do is prove that it is a very effective medium of education
24	yes. easier than I had thought before logging on and getting settled
25	somewhat, It is harded than i thought it would be.
26	Not really. It has pretty much stayed the same
27	hasn't changed
29	No. I did not have a very good experience I know for a fact that I submited about 85% of my work on time and still recieved very few participation marks. Also, I think that my marks would have been better if I would have been in a classroom.
30	yes
31	Yes, I was able to use to internet frequiently, and learn more about how to use it
32	I still don't like it.
33	No, my attitude hasn't changed, I just know more.
34	no
35	No, I still like computers n' stuff.
36	No.

Question 13: Future Plans

If I were offered another opportunity to take an online course, my attitude would be:

1. Extremely negative
2. Slightly negative
3. Indifferent
4. Slightly positive
5. Extremely positive

Respondent #	Question 13
1	4
2	1
3	5
4	5
5	5
6	4
7	5
8	2
9	2
10	5
11	1
12	2
13	5
14	4
15	4
16	3
17	4
18	1
19	1
20	4
21	5

22	5
23	5
24	5
25	3
26	3
27	4
28	3
29	2
30	3
31	3
32	2
33	5
34	1
35	2
36	2

Answer	Frequency Distribution	
1	5	[redacted]
2	7	[redacted]
3	6	[redacted]
4	7	[redacted]
5	11	[redacted]